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Letter dated 18 December 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Greece in September 2006 (see annex). This report was prepared under my supervision, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Adamantios Th. **Vassilakis**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 December 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of work of the Security Council during the presidency of Greece (September 2006)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Greece in September 2006, the Security Council undertook a very heavy programme of work, addressing a wide range of issues on its agenda, including the Middle East, Côte d'Ivoire, the Sudan, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Iraq and the extension of the mandates of five peacekeeping operations (International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)).

During the month of September, the Security Council held 24 official meetings, including one meeting at the ministerial level on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, and conducted informal consultations on 13 occasions. It adopted seven resolutions and two presidential statements. The President also made one statement to the press on behalf of the Council.

Furthermore, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Dora Bakoyannis, participated and delivered a statement, on behalf of the Council, to the seventh high-level meeting of the Secretary-General with heads of regional and other intergovernmental organizations, held in New York on 21 and 22 September 2006.

On 5 September, the President briefed the press on the programme of work of the Security Council after its adoption. The President also held meetings with the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council, respectively, briefing them on the work of the Security Council.

Through its website (www.greeceun.org), the presidency provided regular updates on the programme of work as well as on the activities of the Council.

Africa

Sudan

On 11 September 2006, in a public debate, Council members discussed the situation in Darfur on the basis of the Secretary-General's latest report on the subject (S/2006/591). The Secretary-General and representatives from the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Conferences, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan attended the meeting. The Secretary-General strongly condemned the escalation of violence, underlining that the fighting had made it much harder for humanitarian workers to reach a population that had already endured far too much. All the participants at the meeting agreed that both the humanitarian and the political situation in Darfur must be addressed expeditiously, although there were diverging views as to how this common goal could be reached.

On 18 September 2006, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jan Pronk, briefed Council members on the Secretary-General's latest report on the situation in the Sudan (S/2006/728). Mr. Pronk stated that the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was largely on course, noting, however, that peace was fragile. With regard to Darfur, Mr. Pronk mentioned five conditions to help revitalize the Darfur Peace Agreement: (a) bringing the non-signatories of the Agreement on board; (b) agreeing on a truce between the Government forces and the rebel movements; (c) addressing the violations of the Agreement through a renewed, fully representative but authoritative Ceasefire Commission; (d) resuming talks to improve the Agreement; and (e) getting off the collision course, both within Sudan and internationally. The members of the Council welcomed the progress that has been made with regard to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and conversely expressed concern over the protracted conflict in Darfur.

On 22 September 2006, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1709 (2006), by which it renewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sudan for two weeks, until 8 October 2006.

On 29 September 2006, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1713 (2006), by which it extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan until 29 September 2007.

Somalia

On 25 September, in a private meeting, members of the Council had an exchange of views on the situation in Somalia with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, Ismael Mohamoud Hurreh, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Raphael Tuju. The two invitees asked the Security Council to elevate the issue of Somalia to a top priority of the Council's agenda and to consider the various proposals made by IGAD to address the situation, including the partial lifting of the United Nations arms embargo.

Ethiopia and Eritrea

On 26 September 2006, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Ethiopia, Eritrea, Azouz Ennifar, presented, in informal consultations, the Secretary-General's latest report on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2006/749) and briefed the Council on the latest developments in the peace process between the two countries, as well as on the activities of UNMEE. The members of the Council expressed different views on the duration of the next UNMEE mandate and, with regard to the peace process, expressed concern over the protracted stalemate in the implementation of the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission.

On 29 September 2006, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1710 (2006), by which it extended the mandate of UNMEE for a period of four months, until 31 January 2007. In addition, the Council expressed its intention, in the event that it determines that the parties have not demonstrated progress towards demarcation by 31 January 2007, to transform or reconfigure UNMEE as the Council may decide.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 22 September 2006, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/40), by which it condemned the clashes that occurred in Kinshasa at the end of August and invited the relevant sanctions committee to examine the situation in the context of the arms embargo imposed by resolutions 1493 (2003) and 1596 (2005) and renewed by resolution 1698 (2006). It also expressed its readiness to consider possible measures against individuals and entities who would further threaten the conduct of free and fair elections, in particular through the use of "hate media".

On 27 September 2006, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, William Lacy Swing, presented, in informal consultations, the Secretary-General's latest report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2006/759) and briefed the Council on the latest developments in the peace process in view of the upcoming second round of presidential elections and the provincial elections, scheduled for 29 October. The members of the Council expressed the view that the Security Council should remain vigilant, bearing in mind the violent clashes that occurred in Kinshasa at the end of August 2006. They also urged all political parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to remain calm before and after the elections and to accept the results in a democratic and inclusive spirit.

On 29 September 2006, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1711 (2006), by which the mandate of MONUC was extended until 15 February 2007, with the exception of the reinforcements that MONUC received from the peacekeeping forces in Burundi (United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB)), whose mandate was extended until 31 December 2006. In the resolution, the Council called on all parties to ensure that free, fair and peaceful elections take place and that security forces exercise restraint and remain impartial during the electoral period.

Sierra Leone

On 7 September 2006, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Victor Da Silva Angelo, presented in informal consultations, the Secretary-General's latest report on the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (S/2006/695) and briefed the Council on the latest developments in the peace consolidation process, pointing out that while considerable progress has been made in this regard, significant challenges such as youth unemployment and corruption still remain and need to be addressed. The members of the Council welcomed progress achieved but stressed the need for further efforts to be made by the Government of Sierra Leone to address the root causes of the conflict and guarantee the conduct of free, fair and democratic elections in 2007.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 12 September 2006, during informal consultations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hedi Annabi, briefed the Council on the latest developments in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular on the resignation of the Government due to the incident involving the dumping of toxic waste, and provided an update on the implementation of the benchmarks agreed upon by the Ivorian parties at the meeting in Yamoussoukro on 5 July. The members of the Council expressed concern

that the country was approaching the end of yet another transitional period without elections and expressed hope that the next high-level meeting of the Ivorian parties, scheduled for 20 September, would break the deadlock.

On 14 September 2006, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1708 (2006), by which the mandate of the Group of Experts that monitors implementation of sanctions in Côte d'Ivoire was extended until 15 December 2006.

Liberia

On 25 September 2006, during informal consultations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, Alan Doss, presented the latest report of the Secretary-General on UNMIL (S/2006/958). Mr. Doss underlined the progress made by the Government in restoring peace and stability and pointed out the urgent need to address potential threats to the country's stability, such as unemployment, criminality and the unstable political situation in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire. The members of the Council welcomed the determination of the Liberian Government to rebuild the country and promote good governance and pointed out the need to accelerate progress on security sector reform, while at the same time drafting and implementing a national security strategy plan.

On 29 September 2006, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1712 (2006) by which it extended the mandate of UNMIL until 31 March 2007 and endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations for a phased, gradual consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal of UNMIL.

Europe

Kosovo (Serbia)

On 13 September 2006, the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Joachim Rucker, addressed the Security Council in a public debate on recent developments in Kosovo and on further progress in the implementation of standards, on the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General on Kosovo (S/2006/707). Mr. Rucker underlined the importance of keeping up the momentum in the efforts by the Provisional Institutions of Self Government to maintain progress in standards implementation. Statements were also made by the representatives of Serbia, Finland (on behalf of the European Union), Albania and Ukraine.

On 22 September 2006, Boris Tadic, President of Serbia, addressed the Security Council in a private meeting. Mr. Tadic stressed the good will of the Serb side in the negotiations with the Kosovar Albanians. He described the hardships of the Kosovo Serbs and warned against setting a dangerous precedent by imposing a status settlement outside the norms of international law.

The meeting was followed by informal consultations, during which the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Kosovo, Martti Ahtisaari, briefed the Security Council, on the latest developments on status settlement. He announced his intention to continue respecting the time frame for a resolution of the issue by the end of 2006 and reported on the progress made by the various rounds of technical meetings between the two sides in Vienna. Members of the Security Council welcomed the efforts of the Special Envoy and called on the two sides to show

flexibility and a spirit of compromise during the status negotiations meetings in Vienna.

Georgia

On 29 September 2006, during informal consultations, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hedi Annabi, on the latest incidents in the Kodori valley and their impact on the already fragile situation in this particular part of the country.

Asia

Myanmar

On 29 September 2006, in a private meeting, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, on the situation in Myanmar. The Permanent Representative of Myanmar also addressed the Council.

Afghanistan

On 11 September 2006, in a statement to the press, the President of the Council voiced the Council's unequivocal condemnation of recent suicide bombings in Kabul and other parts of Afghanistan, including the one that had killed the Governor of the Paktia province the previous day.

On 12 September 2006, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1707 (2006), by which it extended the authorization of ISAF in Afghanistan, as defined in resolutions 1386 (2001) and 1510 (2003), for an additional period of 12 months beyond 13 October 2006.

Iraq

On 7 September 2006, during informal consultations, the Acting Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), Demetri Perricos, presented the 26th quarterly report on the activities of UNMOVIC (S/2006/701), covering the period from 1 June to 31 August 2006, submitted in accordance with paragraph 12 of resolution 1284 (1999).

On 14 September 2006, at an open debate, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, presented the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to paragraph 30 of resolution 1546 (2004) (S/2006/706) and briefed the Council on United Nations activities in Iraq and on developments during the last quarter. The Permanent Representative of the United States of America provided the quarterly update on the activities of the Multinational Force in Iraq. The Permanent Representative of Iraq participated in the meeting and briefed the Council on developments in Iraq during the previous three months and on the challenges ahead.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 21 September 2006, at the request of the League of Arab States (S/2006/700), the Security Council held an open debate, at the ministerial level, to discuss the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Secretary-General briefed the Council on the latest developments in the region and on the prospects of the peace process.

The President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, addressed the Council, as did the Foreign Minister of Bahrain, Khalid Bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, on behalf on the Council of Foreign Ministers of the League of Arab States, the Foreign Minister of Finland Erkki Tuomioja, on behalf of the European Union, and the Permanent Representative of Israel.

Lebanon

On 18 September 2006, during informal consultations, the Secretary-General presented his second report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2006/730) and updated members of the Council on the latest developments in Lebanon, following his visit to the region. The members of the Council commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and welcomed the progress that had been made so far in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). They stressed the need for the full implementation of all aspects of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) and reaffirmed their commitment to support all efforts in this regard.

On 29 September 2006, at a public briefing, the Commissioner of the International Independent Investigation Commission (IIIC), Serge Brammertz, presented the fifth report of the Commission (S/2006/760, annex). The Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Lebanon and the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic also addressed the Council.

The members of the Council continued their deliberations on this issue during informal consultations attended by the Commissioner of the IIIC. At the end of the consultations, the President of the Council delivered a statement to the press welcoming the report and commending the Commissioner and his team for their work.

Thematic issues

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 28 September 2006, at an open meeting, the Council was briefed by the Chairmen of three subsidiary bodies: the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities; the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism; and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). The Chairmen presented their quarterly activity reports on the work carried out by their respective Committees, the progress made and the remaining challenges. The members of the Council reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security and underlined the need for an enhanced dialogue and cooperation among the three Committees.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

On 20 September 2006, the Council held an open debate on the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. The debate was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Dora Bakoyannis. The Secretary-General made a statement, followed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno.

Prior to the debate, the Greek presidency had circulated a discussion/concept paper on the topic stating specific ideas on how the Security Council could pursue a more rational and effective cooperation with regional and other intergovernmental organizations, including, in particular, enhanced consultation and exchange of information between itself and these organizations.

Following the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/39) in which it stressed, inter alia, the benefits of closer cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security and reiterated its agreement to expand consultations and promote closer and more operational cooperation with such organizations, in particular in the fields of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping.